

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES: FOSTER HOME LICENSING & PLACEMENT

Montgomery County DSS partners with the community to recruit, train, license, support and monitor foster and adoptive homes for children in foster care.

Foster and adoptive families are diverse in race, ethnicity, income and age. There are both single and married foster parents. We encourage interested persons to contact us to learn about the required 30 hour training "Model Approach to Partnership in Parenting" (MAPP) offered several times per year.

There are children in need of committed, flexible, open, loving and capable families for short term placements as well as those families interested in fostering to adopt children. The mutual assessment and selection process helps families determine if fostering is a good match for them.

Foster Home Licensing & Placement Services Include:

- Training
- Assessment
- Licensure
- Foster care board payment after licensure
- Ongoing support and training

Children & Family Services: Family Permanency Casemanagement

Foster Care is temporary substitute care for children who cannot remain safely in their home as determined by the Court. Child placement services shall be provided to any child in the custody or placement responsibility of a County Department of Social Services. Placement of a child in foster care requires assessment of the child and family's needs and careful planning.

The placement process focuses on the whole family rather than only on the child in placement. The child, the family and the foster care providers shall be appropriately prepared for the placement prior to the physical move of the child, except in emergency removals.

Child placement needs are evaluated, arranged, maintained and supervised in licensed or Court-sanctioned placement, with services to assist in reunification or another permanent plan for the child. The agency provides services in conjunction with the community and are community-based, culturally competent, child centered, and family focused. Families for Kids goals:

- Community-Based Family Support
- One Coordinated Assessment
- One Social Work Team
- Single Stable Placement
- One Year To A Permanent Home

Family Permanency & Child Placement Services Include:

- Services to protect children in their own homes, strengthen families, and prevent out-of-home placement
- Careful planning and decision making with the family about placement, when necessary
- Assessing children's needs to ensure appropriate placement and services
- Arranging and monitoring a placement appropriate to the child's needs

- Involving the kinship network to provide planning, placement and other support for the child and family
- Developing and arranging community-based services to support the child and family
- Collaborating with other community service providers working with the family to ensure continuity of services and to prevent duplication of services
- Referring the child and family to needed services, including clinical treatment
- Providing treatment services, as appropriate
- Preparing the child, the child's family, and the foster family for separation and placement, including negotiating and preparing visitation agreements
- Assessing family strengths and needs to determine the appropriate plan for service
- Providing ongoing risk assessment to determine risk to the child and to guide the case planning process
- Working with the family to develop and implement the Family Services Case Plan
- Monitoring and updating the Family Services Case Plan with the family
- Providing case management
- Concurrent permanency planning with the family to develop alternative options to provide a permanent home for a child should reunification fail
- Helping the family meet Family Services Case Plan objectives by providing information, instruction, guidance and mentoring on parenting skills
- Providing counseling to the child and family to help the child and family cope with the grief resulting from the separation and placement
- Arranging medical examinations and other services for the child
- Supervising foster care facility to ensure that the child receives proper care during placement
- Maintaining contact with the family and others significant to the case
- Preparing for and participating in court proceedings
- Maintaining a close working relationship with the agency attorney for guidance in the legal process
- Periodically reviewing the Family Services Case Plan
- Preparing for and facilitating Permanency Planning Action Team meetings
- Providing transportation for children in foster care when needed and not otherwise available, including visits with parents, siblings, and relatives
- Providing independent living services to assist older youth in learning life skills necessary to make a successful transition from foster care to living on their own
- Ensuring that foster care placements across state lines are in compliance with the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children
- Recruiting, developing and supervising foster care families and child care facilities
- Recruiting and assessing relatives and other kin as potential caregivers
- Assessing and periodically reassessing foster care homes and facilities to determine if the home or facility meets the needs of the children it serves
- Providing consultation, technical assistance, and training to assist foster families and foster care facilities to expand and improve the quality of care provided
- Involving foster parents in the planning and decision making for children in foster care
- Facilitating foster/adopt options for children and preparing foster/adoptive parents
- Preparing children for adoptive placements and maintaining life books
- Maintaining the foster care case record and thorough documentation of case activities